BENGALURU, MONDAY, JUNE 22, 2026 www.Bangaloremirror.com 12 Pages PRICE ₹3

Bangalore Mirror

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BREATHING TROUBLE

PM10 levels in city are within safe limits for just four days on average each month, air quality data reveals

PAGE 3

TEETOTALLER TALLY

With only 11% reporting alcohol use, Karnataka has lowest prevalence of male drinkers in South India

PAGE 5

Apex court's declaration of walking on footpath as fundamental right puts spotlight on city where 283 pedestrians lost their lives in 2023 and safety audits have found most footpaths to be in a unusable state either due to encroachment or due to structural flaws

LIVIN' ON THE EDGE

Between 28% and 45% of road fatalities in city involve pedestrians

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The Supreme Court has declared the right to walk on footpaths as a fundamental right, but Bengalureans are wondering if it would change anything as we are hard-pressed to find obstruction-free footpaths in the city. Pedestrians say the city's footpaths are often unusable, forcing them onto busy roads and exposing them to serious safety risks.

In Bengaluru, 283 pedestrians lost lives in 2023. Citizens BM spoke to said that footpaths are so bad or non-existent, that many a times, they have to walk on the roads. However, even in places where footpaths are present, they are routinely occupied by construction debris, parked vehicles, utility boxes,

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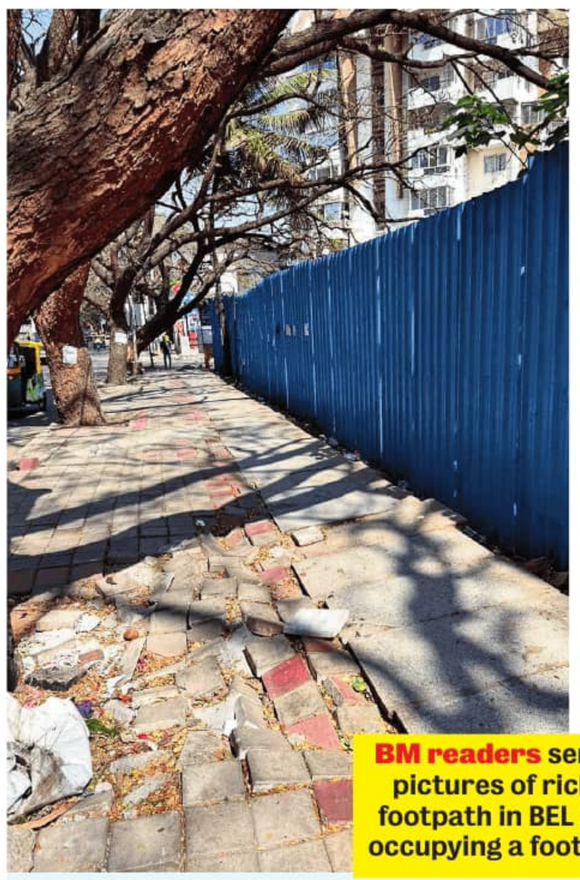

BM readers sent across these pictures of rickety slabs of a footpath in BEL Road and pipes occupying a footpath at Agaram

"It is ironic that we have footpaths but cannot walk on them. The city talks about sustainable mobility, yet pedestrians are often treated as an afterthought

—Navya Gowda, software professional

Go green policy

As MP govt introduces policy pushing for 20 saplings to be planted for every mature tree felled for development work, experts discuss what could work best for B'luru

| Garima Prasher
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A recent tree transplantation policy introduced by the Madhya Pradesh government has sparked debate among Bengaluru-based environmentalists and tree activists about what is the best way to preserve the fast depleting green cover of Karnataka and Bengaluru in particular.

The draft 'Tree Translocation Policy–2026' of MP introduces a "20-for-1" compensatory plantation formula, under which project agencies would be required to plant 20 saplings for every mature tree felled for development works, compared to the existing norm of planting 10 saplings under the general compensatory plantation rule.

It also proposes mandatory transplantation of at least 80% of trees affected by infrastructure projects such as metro rail, flyovers, roads, and railway developments.

Bengaluru-based experts believe Karnataka should consider adopting a similar policy, particularly in view of Bengaluru's shrinking green cover.

"At least 10 replacement trees should be planted within the same locality, while the remaining saplings can be planted elsewhere in Bengaluru's suburban areas. This will help preserve the city's biodiversity,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Poetic moment

For their upcoming 'Tuesdays with the Bard @ Urban Solace' edition, Urban Solace Café is hosting Eva Garg, a poet and artist whose work draws inspiration from rap music, films, emotionally intimate storytelling and everyday life. Where: Urban Solace Café, Ulsoor; When: June 23, 7.30 pm

02 Traditional showcase

The Academy of Music (Regd), Chowdiah Memorial Hall, Vyalikaval, is set to present 'Nrutya Rangoli 2026', a prestigious three-day national dance extravaganza celebrating the richness and diversity of Indian classical dance traditions. Where: Chowdiah Memorial Hall; When: July 10 to 12

03 Classical cadence

Acclaimed sarangi artist Sarfaraaz Khan will be performing for an intimate recital featuring a morning raga, bringing a morning where melody, atmosphere and the rhythms of the day unite in a contemplative musical journey. Where: Lumbini, Jagriti Theatre; When: June 28, 7.30 am

04 Sacred stage

Natanam Institute of Dance presents 'Nruthya Sammilana', a grand Bharatanatyam recital featuring Maanasa Ranga and Divya Vijayalakshmi Dharmarajan, disciples of renowned Bharatanatyam exponent Vidushi Dr Raksha Karthik. Where: Medai – The Stage, Shanthala Nagar; When: June 28, 10 am

05 Walk through stories

Storyteller Vikram Sridhar will be hosting a walk through the lanes of Indiranagar, exploring the area's folklore, heritage and ecology, weaving together historical, mythical and personal narratives that bring the neighbourhood to life. Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: June 27, 7 am

NRI ministry offers hope for overseas Kannadigas

Karnataka government's plan to set up dedicated ministry for state's global diaspora is being welcomed as much needed bridge to deepen engagement and strengthen services

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The state government's decision to establish a dedicated ministry and secretariat for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) has generated optimism among overseas Kannadigas, who have long sought a single-window mechanism to address issues ranging from property disputes and documentation hurdles to employment, investment and rehabilitation support.

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar recently announced that the state government would create a separate NRI Ministry along with an exclusive secretariat to strengthen engagement with the global Kannada diaspora and facilitate investments and services for overseas Indians. The move follows years of demands from NRI groups seeking a dedicated institutional framework to address their concerns.

According to Arathi Krishna, Deputy Chairperson of the Karnataka NRI Forum with Cabinet rank, Karnataka has an estimated 18 lakh overseas Kannadigas spread across Gulf nations, Europe, North America and other regions. While professionals, entrepreneurs and students have made significant contributions abroad, they continue to face a range of challenges that often require intervention from multiple government departments.

"Students travelling abroad for higher education frequently need orientation programmes on documentation, travel regulations and local laws. Many first-time travellers from rural areas are unfamiliar with procedures and face avoidable difficulties," she said.

Significant number of Kannadigas are spread across Gulf nations, Europe, North America, and other overseas regions

Visa-related issues remain a common concern among students and professionals. The forum also receives complaints from overseas Kannadigas relating to property management, inheritance disputes, fraudulent transactions and misuse of power of attorney arrangements. Since many NRIs are unable to visit India frequently, resolving such matters often becomes a lengthy process.

Arathi Krishna said a dedicated ministry could bring together functions currently spread across departments dealing with skill development, migration, education and external affairs, enabling quicker coordination and grievance redressal.

She also highlighted the need for specialised skill development programmes aligned with international demand.

Another area requiring attention is the welfare of returning migrant workers, especially those from Gulf countries. Economic disruptions and geopolitical developments have occasionally resulted in job losses, forcing workers to return home. Providing access to low-interest loans, entrepreneurship support, insurance coverage and rehabilitation programmes could help them rebuild their livelihoods, she said.

She said that several states have already established dedicated mechanisms for engaging with their overseas communities. Kerala's Non-Resident Keralites Affairs (NORKA) department is widely regarded as a successful model, offering welfare schemes, insurance coverage, rehabilitation assistance for returning migrants and support services for expatriates. Tamil Nadu has established a Commissionerate and Welfare Board for Non-Resident Tamils to address grievances and welfare issues, while Andhra Pradesh's Andhra Pradesh Non-Resident Telugu Society (APNRTS) functions as a single-window platform providing assistance ranging from grievance redressal to insurance coverage and migrant support services. Punjab, which has a significant overseas population, operates a dedicated NRI Affairs Department and specialised police cells to fast-track complaints related to property disputes, fraud and matrimonial issues involving NRIs.

Separate ministry could bring together functions currently spread across different departments, enabling quicker coordination and grievance redressal, says Deputy Chairperson of Karnataka NRI Forum

She said Karnataka could study these successful models and create an integrated framework for assistance.

B'luru marks International Yoga Day with community awareness

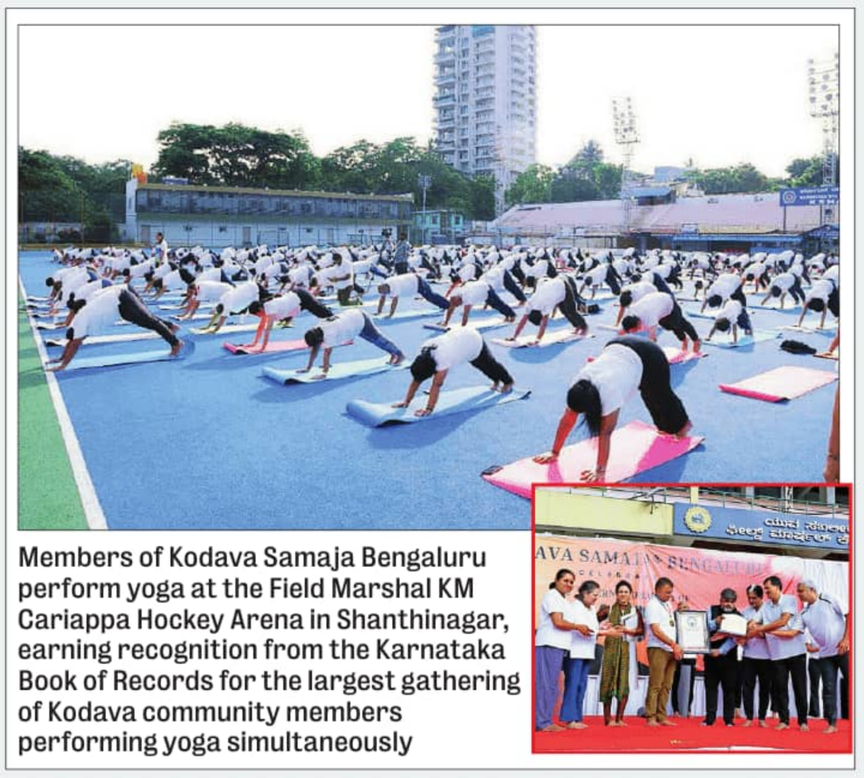
International Yoga Day was observed across Bengaluru on Sunday with participation from government institutions, educational campuses, community organisations and residential associations. Events focused on promoting yoga as part of daily life and highlighted its role in physical and mental wellbeing. At a programme organised by the Department of AYUSH in front of Vidhana Soudha, Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot participated in a mass yoga session marking the 12th International Yoga Day. Addressing the gathering, he said yoga has grown into a global movement since the United Nations declared June 21 as International Yoga Day in 2014. He said yoga helps maintain physical and mental health and called upon people to include yoga in their daily routines.

In another event, Kodava Samaja Bengaluru organised a yoga session at the Field Marshal KM Cariappa Hockey Arena in Shanthinagar. More than 500 members of the Kodava community participated in the programme. Yoga teacher Yamini Muthanna addressed participants and spoke about the role of yoga in maintaining balance in daily life.

Thousands gather outside Vidhana Soudha on Sunday to perform mass yoga as part of International Yoga Day celebrations

The session was led by Mandetira Ramya and included participants across age groups. The event was recognised by the Karnataka Book of Records as the largest gathering of Kodava community members performing yoga simultaneously. Yoga Day was also observed at Sir M Visvesvaraya Institute of Technology, where Sahaja Yoga Karnataka and the institute jointly organised a programme that coincided with World Music Day celebrations. Karnataka Lokayukta Justice BS Patil inaugurated the event.

At Prestige Misty Waters in Kempapura, women residents participated in a saree walkathon organised as part of Yoga Day celebrations. At IIIT-Bangalore, students, faculty members and staff joined a campus-wide yoga session. Director Dr Debabrata Das said yoga promotes physical fitness, mental wellness and focus, adding that regular practice can contribute to long-term wellbeing. — BMB



Members of Kodava Samaja Bengaluru perform yoga at the Field Marshal KM Cariappa Hockey Arena in Shanthinagar, earning recognition from the Karnataka Book of Records for the largest gathering of Kodava community members performing yoga simultaneously

Not a breath of fresh air

Air quality monitoring data shows PM10 levels are above prescribed limits most days in city with fewer than 4 days in a month in safe zone

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Experts say suspended dust particles are major contributor to particulate matter in Bengaluru (File photo)

On average, PM10 levels in Bengaluru remain within the safe zone for fewer than four days a month.

Air quality data from the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) shows that between January and March this year, PM10 concentrations remained below 60 µg/m³, the permissible limit prescribed by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), for just over 3.5 days a month on average.

Bengaluru currently has 11 Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) spread across residential, commercial, industrial and silent zones. These stations monitor air quality round the clock, tracking primary and secondary pollutants as well as key meteorological parameters.

The monitoring stations are located at the City Railway Station, Nisarga Bhavan in Saneguruvanahalli, Veterinary College in Hebbal, Shalini Ground in Jayanagar, KAVIKA on Mysuru Road, NIMHANS, HSR Layout, RV College of Engineering in Kengeri, Jigani Industrial Area, the RTO Office in Kasturinagar and Peenya Industrial Area. Data from all 11 stations show that average PM10 concentrations remained below the prescribed limit on only 4.5 days in January, four days in February and 2.3 days in March.

Among the monitoring locations, the CAAQMS at Saneguruvanahalli consistently recorded the lowest PM10 concentrations, indicating the cleanest air quality in the city.

Environmental researchers say measures such as mandatory dust-control systems at construction sites, better enforcement of existing regulations and continuous monitoring could help Bengaluru reduce PM10 levels

Experts say suspended dust particles are a major contributor to particulate matter in the city, mainly PM10. A 2022 report on emission inventory and pollution reduction strategies for Bengaluru by the Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP) estimated that construction activities contribute around 11 per cent of the city's PM10 emissions.

"Dust from construction sites and unpaved roads is a primary source of PM10. Bengaluru has been under construction for years now. A substantial share of PM10 can be linked to large-scale infrastructure projects, particularly metro construction works. Unchecked construction dust continues to pose significant challenges to Bengaluru's air quality," said an expert.

Environmental researchers say measures such as mandatory dust-control systems at construction sites, better enforcement of existing regulations and continuous monitoring could help Bengaluru reduce PM10 levels.

However, Bengaluru's ever-increasing vehicle population has to be curtailed, says Professor Gufran Beig, Chair Professor at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS).

"Construction activities and vehicular emissions are among the primary contributors to elevated PM10 and PM2.5 levels in the city. The number of vehicles on Bengaluru's roads is increasing exponentially, while average travel speeds are declining due to congestion. This results in traffic stagnation, which not only leads to higher emissions of PM2.5 but also PM10 due to unpaved roads and shoulders," said Professor Beig.

Experts say authorities must focus on improving traffic management to ensure smoother traffic and reduce vehicular pollution.

Panic after short circuit sparks fire at Metro Station

Passengers at Nagasandra Metro Station were briefly alarmed after a minor fire broke out at the station on Sunday afternoon. The incident occurred near the emergency exit area, where a signboard reportedly caught fire following a suspected short circuit. Station staff and emergency responders rushed to contain the blaze, which damaged the station's name board. In a statement, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited said the fire was reported around 1.30 pm and fire and emergency personnel quickly extinguished it. No injuries or casualties were reported, and metro services on the Madavara-Silk Institute Green Line continued without disruption.

–BMB

NEET aspirant too late for test

A NEET-UG aspirant from Gangavathi was allegedly denied entry to an exam centre in Koppal on Sunday after arriving 23 minutes past the prescribed reporting deadline. The student, identified as BB Fatima, reached the Government First Grade College examination centre at 1.53 pm, while NTA guidelines required candidates to enter the venue by 1.30 pm. Although the examination began at 2 pm, officials refused entry. The student and her parents expressed anguish outside the centre. Police later intervened to calm tensions at the venue.

–BMB

Devotion is the best reason to take a vacation

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Bengaluru is emerging as a key driver in India's growing 'faithcation' trend, where temple visits are increasingly being reimagined as short, frequent getaways that combine devotion, wellness and leisure. New analysis by an electric intercity mobility platform indicates a sharp rise in spiritual travel demand, with the Bengaluru–Tirupati corridor showing strong and sustained growth over the past two years.

On the Bengaluru–Tirupati route, monthly passenger volumes have nearly doubled—from around 6,000 tickets per month in April 2024 to over 11,700 by March 2026. The route has also recorded a 9.7 per cent year-on-year increase in passengers, underlining steady growth in weekend-driven pilgrimage travel originating from the city.

The data from Fresh Bus highlights how Bengaluru residents are increasingly adopting shorter, repeat spiritual trips rather than annual pilgrimages. Nearly 46 per cent of all bookings on the Bengaluru–Tirupati corridor occur between Friday and Sunday, pointing to the growing popularity of weekend temple travel. This shift suggests that religious travel is becoming more integrated into urban lifestyles, with devotees using weekends for quick spiritual resets.

Repeat visitation is another defining feature of the trend. More than 52 per cent of passengers on the Bengaluru–Tirupati corridor undertook multiple journeys during the study period, including over 5,100 devotees who completed eight or more trips within two years. This indicates that temple travel is no longer occasional but increasingly habitual for a segment of frequent travellers.

The analysis also shows that Bengaluru is contributing significantly to the broader growth of Tirupati-linked pilgrimage routes.

Tirupati draws large number of visitors driven by its established religious significance and strong transport connectivity (File photo)

Along with neighbouring corridors, demand from Bengaluru, Chennai and Vijayawada to Tirupati has risen sharply, with a 92 per cent year-on-year increase in devotees collectively travelling from these cities. For Bengaluru specifically, improved connectivity and structured bus services are helping sustain this upward trajectory.

Demographic shifts further reinforce the evolving nature of 'faithcation' travel. On the Bengaluru–Tirupati route, 2.8 per cent of passengers are under 18 years, suggesting strong family and multi-generational travel. The 35–59 age group accounts for 23.6 per cent of travellers, up from 21.1 per cent in the previous financial year.

Female participation has increased across major temple corridors, while senior citizens continue to form steady and growing share of travellers

The trend is also becoming more inclusive. Female participation has increased across major temple corridors, while senior citizens continue to form a steady and growing share of travellers. At the same time, nearly three-fourth of bookings on the Bengaluru–Tirupati route originate through digital platforms, highlighting wider adoption of organised, app-based travel solutions beyond metro cities into Tier-2 and Tier-3 markets.

According to Fresh Bus founder and CEO Sudhakar Chirra, the shift reflects a broader change in travel behaviour. "For generations, pilgrimage in India was largely associated with annual family trips and festive calendars. What we're seeing today is a significant shift in behaviour. More travellers are choosing short spiritual getaways throughout the year whether it's a weekend visit to seek blessings, spend quality time with family or simply disconnect from the pace of everyday life," said Chirra.

He further added, "As connectivity improves and travel becomes more accessible, temples are increasingly emerging as year-round destinations rather than places visited only on special occasions. We believe this trend will continue to shape the future of spiritual tourism in India."

Rejuvenated Shikaripalya Lake slips back into crisis

Residents blame sewage contamination, lake filled of dead fish and vandalism for worsening lake condition, while Panchayat promises fencing and protection measures

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Shikaripalya Lake continues to hit the headlines for the wrong reasons. Though the waterbody was rejuvenated a few years ago, there is little to celebrate its current condition. With authorities remaining apathetic and some residents lacking civic sense, the lake appears to be back to square one. Environmentalists and residents with civic consciousness have expressed concern over the deteriorating state of the lake and urged authorities to take immediate measures to protect it.

"It is said a tanker dumped sludge into the stormwater drain connected to the lake. The contaminated water entered the lake, resulting in a foul smell from dead fish. A complaint has already been raised. The Panchayat and concern authorities must take immediate action against those responsible. Two-wheelers are also entering the lake area and damaging the bund. After the lake rejuvenation by CDD India, fencing and strict protection measures have become urgently necessary to preserve the lake ecosystem," said Mani Ranjan, a resident.

He said he had already raised a complaint with the authorities regarding the dead fish and contamination. "Immediate intervention from the Panchayat and other government departments is required to identify those responsible and prevent further sewage discharge into the lake. Authorities must take immediate action to safeguard Shikaripalya Lake and ensure that public funds and community efforts invested in the rejuvenation are not wasted," he said.

Authorities urged to identify polluters and safeguard restored water body

Emphasising the need to protect the lake, resident Ishaan Singh said residents met Panchayat officials on Saturday. "The Panchayat officials have explained the measures taken to protect the lake. We are told that some people with vested interests have broken the sluice gate installed to prevent garbage from entering the lake," he said.

Expressing concern over the lake's condition, resident Parul Sharan said she was unhappy with its status. "The Panchayat officials have installed a sluice gate, but a few people broke the lock of the gate. I believe it is the responsibility of the citizens to protect the lake and safeguard the fence and sluice gate

– Parul Sharan, resident

have installed a sluice gate, but a few people broke its lock. I believe it is the responsibility of citizens to protect the lake and safeguard the fence and sluice gate," she said.

Hulimangala Panchayat Development Officer HV Krishnappa said measures had been taken to prevent sewage from entering the lake. "I have already sent a proposal for fencing the lake to higher authorities. A few miscreants are causing a nuisance by breaking concrete pillars to steal steel rods. The pending works will be completed as soon as approval is received from higher authorities," he said.

After pollution complaints, KIADB targets night noise

Report submitted to KSPCB outlines measures addressing committee recommendations after allegations of pollution, groundwater extraction and wastewater discharge

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In a report submitted to the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB), the Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board (KIADB) stated that it is taking steps to reduce night-time noise pollution in the Harohalli Industrial Area.

According to the report, KIADB plans to bring down noise levels with the help of experts and adopt appropriate mitigation measures.

"KIADB will approach an expert for guidance and suggestions on reducing noise levels during nighttime by adopting good practices and appropriate measures on a priority basis," the Board stated.

KIADB has also earmarked 147 acres for parks and 76.36 acres as a buffer zone to enhance green cover in the Harohalli Phase III Industrial Area.

The measures follow findings of a joint committee constituted after an application was filed before the National Green Tribunal (NGT) in 2022 alleging air and water pollution by industries operating in the area. The petition also claimed that industries were extracting groundwater while discharging untreated wastewater into the environment.

Following the allegations, the NGT directed the formation of a committee comprising representatives from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), the KSPCB, KIADB and the District Magistrate. The KSPCB was designated as the nodal agency for coordination and compliance.

Among its recommendations, the committee advised KIADB to develop and maintain a green belt around the industrial area to mitigate noise pollution in surrounding villages and establish a buffer zone around the upcoming Harohalli Phase III and Phase IV industrial areas. It also recommended that KIADB consult experts and implement suitable measures to reduce night-time noise levels.

KIADB reported that Harohalli and Bidadi industrial areas have been sanctioned a combined water supply of 13.5 MLD to support industrial operations

The KIADB report stated that the Harohalli and Bidadi industrial areas have been sanctioned by a total water supply of 13.5 MLD. KIADB awarded a contract worth Rs 5.48 crore in November for the construction of a water distribution network for Harohalli Phase I and Phase II industrial areas in Harohalli Taluk, Bengaluru South district.

Rs 35.59-crore treatment plant will supply water to three industrial zones

KIADB also informed the KSPCB that the contract for constructing a 10 MLD tertiary treatment plant near Byramangala Lake on the Vrishabhavathi River has been awarded. The plant will supply treated water to the Bidadi, Shanamangala and Harohalli industrial areas. The project, valued at Rs 35.59 crore, including operation and maintenance for 10 years, is currently under progress.

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Monkey menace

Sidedahalli

Residents of an apartment in 15th Cross Sidedahalli, Golden Enclave Phase 1, say groups of monkeys have been causing persistent nuisance for the past three to four months. Despite repeated complaints, authorities have yet to provide a permanent solution.

Road obstruction

Sahakarnagar

Residents have raised concerns over a blocked road stretch behind a store in Sahakarnagar, saying it has caused inconvenience to commuters and the public.

Pothole peril

HRBR Layout

A large pothole on the service road near ORR in HRBR Layout 1st Block, Kalyan Nagar, has become a safety hazard for motorists. Residents have urged authorities to carry out repairs at the earliest.

Service tax action against banks over minimum balance struck down

The Karnataka High Court has struck down service tax proceedings initiated against several banks over the maintenance of Minimum Average Balance (MAB) in customer accounts, holding that such balances cannot be treated as consideration for banking services under the Finance Act, 1994.

Justice SR Krishna Kumar delivered the ruling while allowing petitions filed by Canara Bank, Bank of Baroda and Karnataka Bank. The banks had challenged show-cause notices issued by tax authorities seeking to levy service tax, interest and penalties for the pre-GST period on the premise that customers maintaining stipulated minimum balances amounted to providing non-monetary consideration for banking services.

The banks argued that maintaining a minimum balance was merely a contractual requirement attached to specific account types and did not involve any payment or consideration flowing from customers in return for services.

Examining Sections 65B(44), 66B, 66E(e) and 67 of the Finance Act, the Court observed that the levy of service tax depends upon the existence of consideration and that the statutory mechanism for valuation under Section 67 also presupposes its presence.

Rejecting the tax department's interpretation, the Court held that maintenance of MAB could not be equated with consideration for banking services. "The act of the customers in maintaining MAB cannot be construed, treated, categorised or described as 'consideration' towards the services provided by the petitioners-Banks," the Court said.

Concluding that the notices lacked legal foundation and were unsupported by the statutory scheme of the Finance Act, the Court quashed the show-cause notices and all consequential proceedings. **–BMB**

IN HIGH COURT

Procurement changes must not put ethanol plants at disadvantage

The Karnataka High Court has held that Dedicated Ethanol Plants (DEPs) that invested in production facilities based on a procurement framework created by Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) cannot later be placed at a disadvantage through changes in procurement conditions.

Justice M Nagaprasanna passed the order while allowing a petition filed by VINP Distilleries and Sugars Pvt Ltd, a Haveri-based ethanol producer, which challenged ethanol procurement allocation under the Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025–26 programme. The company sought a direction to Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) and Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) to consider its request for enhanced procurement.

VINP contended that it established its ethanol facility after making substantial investments based on procurement assurances under the agreement. However, the ESY 2025–26 tender adopted a mechanism that restricted preferential allocation beyond the assured quantity, resulting in a significantly lower allocation than what the company had offered to supply.

The High Court noted that the OMCs had themselves invoked the relevant clause of the agreement to enhance procurement from the assured quantity of 1.44 crore litres to approximately 3.92 crore litres. Having relied on that clause for one purpose, they could not selectively disregard it while considering the petitioner's request.

The Court observed that dedicated ethanol plants had entered the sector and invested in response to procurement assurances offered by OMCs. Accordingly, it directed BPCL, HPCL and IOCL to consider the company's representation and take a decision within four weeks. **–BMB**

We stock up on our liquor, but are not big drinkers

Despite being one of South India's biggest liquor markets, K'taka recorded lowest male alcohol consumption rate in the region at 11%, according to NFHS-6 data

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Revenue figures and drinking prevalence tell different stories in Karnataka

Karnataka may be one of India's largest liquor markets in terms of sales and excise revenue, but the latest national health survey presents a contrasting picture regarding actual consumption. According to the National Family Health Survey-6 (NFHS-6) for 2023-24, Karnataka has the lowest prevalence of alcohol consumption among men in South India, with only 11 per cent reporting alcohol use.

The figure is significantly lower than in neighbouring southern states. Telangana recorded the highest prevalence of male alcohol consumption in the region at 43.9 per cent, followed by Tamil Nadu at 23.5 per cent, Andhra Pradesh at 23.3 per cent and Kerala at 22.7 per cent. Karnataka's 11 per cent is well below the national average of 18.9 per cent.

The findings challenge the perception that Karnataka's strong liquor sales necessarily translate into higher consumption rates among residents. Industry observers point out that excise collections are influenced by factors such as population size, urbanisation, tourism, purchasing power and interstate demand, making revenue figures an imperfect indicator of drinking prevalence.

The survey also highlights a different trend in tobacco use. While alcohol consumption among men is the lowest in the South, Karnataka emerges as one of the leading southern states in tobacco use among men, with 21.9 percent reporting consumption. This suggests that while fewer men consume alcohol compared to neighbouring states, tobacco remains a significant public health concern in the state.

Survey results highlight Karnataka's distinct substance-use pattern, combining low alcohol consumption with significant tobacco use among men across the state

Among women, alcohol consumption remains extremely low across South India. Karnataka reported a prevalence of around 0.5 per cent, placing it behind Telangana and Andhra Pradesh but marginally above Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Telangana stood out as an exception, with female alcohol consumption rates far higher than those recorded in the rest of the region.

A public health expert said, "The NFHS data offers a more reliable measure of consumption patterns than sales figures because it is based on household-level surveys conducted across urban and rural populations. However, lower alcohol consumption should not lead to complacency, particularly when tobacco use remains comparatively high and continues to pose serious health risks."

An excise department official said, "The latest findings are likely to add an interesting dimension to policy discussions on substance use in Karnataka. The survey highlights the need for targeted health interventions that address the state's distinct consumption patterns rather than relying solely on revenue-based perceptions."

Rich KR Market is skimping on rent

Despite handling business worth crores every day, Bengaluru's iconic KR Market generates only a fraction of its potential rental revenue for the GBA. Shop owners pay an average rent of just Rs 25 per sq ft, with a 58 sq ft ground-floor shop fetching barely Rs 1,350 a month. After a 12-year legal battle over a proposed rent revision, the GBA is set to fix fresh rental rates by the end of this month, following a High Court directive empowering the civic commissioner to take the final decision.

Spread across 7.96 acres with 1,269 shops, KR Market has long faced allegations of revenue leakage, with many allottees reportedly subletting shops at market rates while paying nominal rents to the GBA. Officials say only around 400 tenants pay rent regularly, while many others have defaulted for years. Once revised rates are notified, the civic body plans to recover pending dues. GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao has also ordered a fire audit, encroachment clearance and cleanliness drives to revamp the historic market. **–BMB**

Doctor booked for polluting lake with medicinal waste

An FIR has been registered against a private doctor after medical waste was allegedly dumped into a lake at Yentaganahalli in Bengaluru Rural district. The action follows directions from Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Eshwar Khandre, who was informed about the issue during a surprise visit to the village panchayat and directed officials to inspect the site and initiate criminal proceedings.

Officials found used syringes, blood-stained cotton and bandages stuffed into cement bags and discarded in a channel feeding water into the lake. Based on the findings, a complaint was filed at the Nelamangala police station against private clinic doctor Arun Girish Sagar. Authorities said the doctor admitted the waste originated from his clinic. **–BMB**

Cut down on tree-felling to begin with

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

improve ecological resilience, and mitigate the impacts of microclimate change," said Vinod Jacob, urban strategist and environmentalist.

Environmentalists have also called for the city's ongoing tree census to be completed at the earliest and the findings made public to enable an accurate assessment of Bengaluru's green cover loss.

They further argue that Bengaluru urgently needs the creation of new urban green spaces. As the city expands, the Master Plan should provide for large public green lungs similar to Lalbagh and Cubbon Park in emerging growth corridors. Expanding and protecting urban green cover, they say, is critical for environmental sustainability and improving residents' quality of life.

However, a forestry expert points out that while the Madhya Pradesh model may benefit Karnataka as a whole, implementing the 20-for-1 plantation formula within Bengaluru could prove challenging due to space constraints.

"For cities like Bengaluru, a 1:20 plantation ratio is difficult because adequate land is simply not available. The city is constantly undergoing development activities. Such a model can be implemented only if plantation efforts are extended beyond the Greater Bengaluru Area (GBA) jurisdiction," said a city-based forestry expert.

Dr. C Nagarajaiah, former Head of the Department of Forestry and Environmental Science at the University of Agricultural Sciences (GKVK), believes the most effective solution for Bengaluru is to minimise tree felling by avoiding road-widening projects and limiting the construction of new road infrastructure.

"Our best bet is to prevent tree felling because Bengaluru has very little space available for compensatory plantation. While development is important, there must be a balance to ensure that such activities remain sustainable. We have already lost thousands of trees to metro and suburban rail projects. While mass transit systems are examples of sustainable development, road infrastructure projects are not. The government should expedite metro and suburban rail projects while also restricting the registration of new private vehicles, especially cars," said Dr. Nagarajaiah.

SC ruling will force civic agencies to treat footpaths as essential public infra

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

garbage heaps, commercial encroachments and temporary structures. In many areas, footpaths are either broken, uneven or missing altogether. "Most footpaths are unusable. Either bikes are parked on them or construction material has been dumped there for weeks. I end up walking on the road almost every day," said Ramesh Krishna, a resident of BTM Layout.

Others point out that the problem goes beyond encroachments. "Even where footpaths exist, many are cracked, uneven or have missing slabs. During the rains they become impossible to use. We are often forced to choose between walking on a damaged pavement or alongside moving traffic," said Vanitha Bai, a resident of Jayanagar.

The consequences are reflected in road safety data. According to figures cited by the Bengaluru Traffic Police and transportation experts at the Indian Institute of Science, pedestrians account for between 28% and 45% of road fatalities in the city. Urban mobility advocates argue that damaged footpaths, poor maintenance and illegal encroachments routinely push pedestrians onto carriageways, increasing their exposure to traffic and making even short daily walks hazardous. "It is ironic that we have footpaths but cannot walk on them. The city talks about sustainable mobility, yet pedestrians are often treated as an afterthought," said Navya Gowda, a software professional, who walks daily between a Metro station and her workplace.

WHAT LIES ON FOOTPATHS?

- Construction debris and demolition waste
- Sand, bricks, cement bags and other building materials
- Temporary labour sheds at construction sites
- Street food carts and vending stalls
- Shop extensions and merchandise displays
- Garbage piles and commercial waste
- Dry leaves, tree branches and garden waste
- Dangling cables and fibre-optic wires
- BESCOM transformers and utility boxes
- Unfinished drainage slabs and civic works material
- Discarded furniture and e-waste
- Parked two-wheelers and scooters
- Abandoned and scrap vehicles
- Waterlogged and poorly maintained stretches

Recent walkability audits conducted by citizen groups, including those associated with mobility activist Arun Pai, have highlighted the scale of the challenge. Several audited stretches reportedly failed to meet basic pedestrian standards. A large majority of footpaths were found to be obstructed by vehicles, debris or encroachments, while accessibility for wheelchair users was virtually absent. Poor lighting, flooding and uneven surfaces were also identified as recurring concerns. Urban planners say the Supreme Court ruling places greater responsibility on civic agencies to treat footpaths as essential public infrastructure rather than leftover space after accommodating motor vehicles.

"The judgment sends a clear message that walking is not a privilege but a right. Safe, continuous and accessible footpaths should be considered as important as roads," said Krishna Kumar, a college student. For residents, the ruling offers hope that pedestrian needs will finally receive the attention they deserve. However, many believe real change will depend on enforcement and regular maintenance rather than policy announcements alone.

Send us pictures of some of the most unwalkable footpaths you have to deal with at mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com

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I Fouzia Fareen, W/o Aslam. S R/o 1111/A 16th Cross, HBR Layout 3rd Block, Bengaluru Shall Be Known as Fouzia Farheen Zoya for all Purpose.

I, Syed Ajmil R/o Ward No 07 Near Water Tank kote Sidla - ghatta Chikkaballapur Dist 562105 have changed my minor daughter's name from Huzma Sultana to Uzma Sultana .

I Sameena Taj Chandpasha Jabeena taj W/o Dadapeer R/o 19 ward aAmeeria masjid Azad nagar Sidlaghatta Chikka - ballapur 562105 have changed my name to Sameena Taj .

I Purushothama Shyabalu Mogannegowda R/O, Thalaghattapura have corrected my name to Purushotham Shyabalu Mogannegowda for all future purposes.

I, Aruna Sulikunte Narayana Reddy W/o Krishna Reddy Nanjunda Reddy, resident of Sri Chowdeshwari Devi Nilaya, Plot No. 172, Royal Town Road 2, Mathigiri, Hosur - 635110, Tamilnadu have changed my name from Aruna Sulikunte Narayana Reddy to Aruna Krishna Reddy and henceforth I shall be known as Aruna Krishna Reddy in all purpose, vide affidavit GG0048004350 dated 05/06/2026 sworn before Notary Public N. Rajendiran, Chennai

I, Jayakrishnan Parameswaran Nampiathiri Son of T.N.Parameswaran Nampiathiri, residing at Lotus-102, Oceanus Greendale Apartment, 16th Cross, 3RD Main, Hoysalanagar, Ramamurthy Nagar, Bengaluru-560016, have changed my name from Jayakrishnan Parameswaran Nampiathiri to Jayakrishnan Parameswaran vide affidavit dated 20-06-2026 sworn before Y.R.Chandrasekar, Advocate &Notary, Bengaluru

tender & notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the general public that the name of our company, **Bhandari Builders Limited**, has been changed to **Bhandari Builders Private Limited** with effect from the date of approval by the Registrar of Companies, NCT Delhi and Haryana

Please note that **Bhandari Builders Limited** and **Bhandari Builders Private Limited** refer to one and the same company and are used interchangeably

All existing and future dealings, transactions, documents, agreements, and records in the name of **Bhandari Builders Limited** shall henceforth be deemed to be in the name of **Bhandari Builders Private Limited.**

Henceforth, all correspondence and transactions may be continued in the name of **Bhandari Builders Private Limited.**

This public notice is issued for the information of all concerned

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NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Python prank

In a bizarre case from a village in Nelamangala taluk, residents were alarmed after an AI-generated image of a giant python went viral on social media. The photo was reportedly created by a group of youngsters to scare the village waterman, whom they accused of irregular water supply. The image was so convincing that even snake rescuer Arun rushed to the spot and spent nearly two hours searching for the reptile before discovering it was fake. Once the truth emerged, the village's moment of panic turned into laughter.

Metro landfill

Bengaluru's metro construction sites appear to have found a second purpose beyond building transport infrastructure. Speaking to journalists, Bengaluru Development Minister Krishna Byregowda said several project stretches resemble dumping yards, with construction debris, iron scrap and materials spilling onto roads and worsening traffic bottlenecks. With waste piling up around work zones, some residents seem to have taken it as an invitation to add their own garbage to the mix.

Suit syndrome

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar recently offered an interesting glimpse into how influence and corruption can quietly seep into the corridors of power. Speaking at a programme, he remarked that if drivers or gunmen were bribed, they could usher certain visitors straight into his antechamber, while genuine citizens might struggle even to enter Vidhana Soudha. He also observed that officials often tend to be swayed by people dressed in sharp suits, assuming they are more important than others waiting outside. Stressing that such practices have no place in governance, Shivakumar said he had taken steps to curb them.

Potato politics

A political jibe over wealth creation triggered an unusual lesson in personal finance from Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy. Responding to

Magadi MLA HC Balakrishna, who sarcastically questioned whether Kumaraswamy had amassed his wealth by cultivating potatoes, the former chief minister traced his assets back to his pre-politics days in the Kannada film industry. He told journalists, "I purchased 45 acres of land long before entering politics, using earnings from my stint as a film exhibitor and later as a producer." Recalling the industry's economics at the time, he noted that exhibitors who once earned around ₹4 lakh per venture eventually saw returns rise to ₹10-15 lakh, enabling him to acquire land.

Not rocket science?

Looks like Bengaluru's endless pothole saga has finally tested the patience of Development Minister Krishna Byregowda. Wondering why the city continues to oscillate between filling one pothole and discovering another, the minister remarked that building roads that do not develop craters is hardly "rocket science." Pointing out that Bengaluru's roads compare poorly with those in other southern states, he urged officials to move beyond the familiar "old stone, new patchwork" approach and focus on constructing durable, high-quality roads.

Degree delight

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar took a nostalgic trip down memory lane during the convocation ceremony of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS), recalling how politics interrupted his student life and delayed his graduation. He told graduates that although he had already served as a minister in governments led by Bangarappa and SM Krishna, the joy of finally earning a degree from Mysore University at the age of 47 in 2008 was unmatched. "No other achievement gave me the happiness that receiving my degree did," he said, drawing applause from the audience.

Samurai Blue break all records

Japan script history as tournament reaches 1000-match milestone in over nine decades

The 1000th match in FIFA World Cup history turned into a landmark occasion for Japan as the Samurai Blue registered the biggest victory in their World Cup journey, thrashing Tunisia 4-0 in a Group F clash at Estadio Monterrey on Sunday.

Ninety-six years after the first World Cup match was played in Montevideo, Uruguay, Japan marked the tournament's 1000th game by becoming the first Asian nation to score four goals in a FIFA World Cup match.

The emphatic result also extended their unbeaten run at the World Cup to four matches, the longest such streak in the country's history.

The victory lifted Japan to four points in Group F, level with leaders Netherlands but behind on goals scored. Tunisia, meanwhile, were eliminated in the group stage for a seventh successive World Cup appearance, extending an unwanted record.

Only Scotland, with eight previous appearances, have played in more World Cups without ever reaching the knockout rounds.

According to ESPN, Japan's fast start produced another record when Daichi Kamada found the net after just 3 minutes and 27 seconds, the quickest goal ever scored by a Japanese player in FIFA World Cup history.

Ayase Ueda emerged as the star of the night, becoming the first Japanese footballer to score a brace and register three goal contributions in a single World Cup match. His two goals and overall influence spearheaded a dominant performance that left Tunisia chasing shadows for much of the contest.

Kamada Daichi (1st R) of Japan celebrates scoring with his teammates

The match against Japan was Tunisia's 20th FIFA World Cup match. They became only the fourth African nation to reach that mark after Cameroon (26 matches), Morocco (25) and Nigeria (21).

Japan seized control early through Kamada after a flowing team move exposed the Tunisian defence. Ueda doubled the lead in the 31st minute with a low finish into the corner before Junya Ito added a third midway through the second half after racing clear of the defence.

Ueda completed the scoring late on with a looping header, sealing Japan's first-ever four-goal World Cup performance and strengthening their hopes of automatic qualification for the Round of 32.

Japan now need only a point from their final group match against Sweden, while Tunisia bow out after another group-stage exit. **–ANi**

Save after save

Tiny Curacao battled to a 0-0 draw with Ecuador to earn the first World Cup point in the Caribbean island's history on Saturday after an outstanding performance from goalkeeper Eloy Room enabled them to celebrate a landmark day. Six days after being humbled 7-1 by Germany on their World Cup debut, Curacao -- the smallest nation ever to reach the finals with a population of about 156,000 -- produced a resilient display to frustrate the South Americans and keep alive their hopes of reaching the knockout stage. The 37-year-old Room, whose shutout of Jamaica in November sealed Curacao's place in the tournament, was the standout figure, making 15 saves that set a record for a 90-minute World Cup match. American Tim Howard holds the World Cup record for all-time saves with 16, but that was after extra time, in the U.S. loss to Belgium in the round of 16 in 2014. The goalless draw that confirmed Germany as Group E winners was a blow for Ecuador -- who arrived at the tournament on a 19-game unbeaten run -- and their fans, who were left deflated as chances went begging, leaving them with a point from two games. Ecuador's Enner Valencia had a terrific chance in the third minute when he was one-on-one with Room, but the keeper, who plays for Miami FC in the USL Championship, dived to tip the ball wide of the post with a stunning one-handed save. **–Reuters**

Netherlands rout Sweden 5-1

Brian Brobbey and Cody Gakpo both struck twice as the Netherlands produced a dominant performance to defeat Sweden 5-1, registering their first win of the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Brobbey, who replaced Crysencio Summerville in the only change from the 2-2 draw against Japan, scored two goals inside the opening 17 minutes in Houston. His early brace marked the fourth-fastest in FIFA World Cup history.

Sweden gradually settled into the contest and created several chances towards the end of the first half, but Gakpo took control after the break, scoring twice within seven minutes to put the Dutch firmly in charge.

Anthony Elanga pulled one back for Sweden just before the hour mark, but substitute Summerville added a late fifth goal for Ronald Koeman's side, who are now close to securing a place in the knockout stage. **–ANI**

Trionda in space

In a unique intersection of space science and sports engineering, the official match ball for the FIFA World Cup 2026, the 'Trionda', was sent to the International Space Station (ISS) with astronauts aboard to study ball balance in microgravity.

"The official FIFA World Cup ball went to space. Soccer balls need to move predictably, so sports engineers carefully measure and optimise their centre of mass and balance," NASA said in an Instagram post.

In partnership with the ISS National Laboratory in 2019, researchers used the station's microgravity environment to study how a soccer ball's internal mass affects its motion, stability, and rotation. The findings have improved understanding of how embedded technologies, including match-ball sensors, can influence performance during play. The research contributed to studies used in the development and evaluation of soccer balls for major international tournaments, including FIFA World Cup competition. **–IANS**

Most-capped goalkeeper

Germany's Manuel Neuer created history by becoming the goalkeeper with the most appearances in FIFA World Cup history, featuring in his 21st match during his side's Group E clash against the Ivory Coast on Saturday (local time), surpassing France's Hugo Lloris.

Neuer went past Hugo Lloris, who had 20 World Cup appearances, to set a new benchmark for goalkeepers on the global stage, according to 433 X handle.

In the same match, Ivory Coast's Franck Kessie, who opened the scoring in the 30th minute, further added to his World Cup legacy. At 29 years and 183 days, Kessie also became the second-oldest goalscorer for the Ivory Coast in World Cup history, behind only Didier Drogba, who scored in 2010 at the age of 32 years and 101 days, according to Opta. **–ANI**

Dubious spending

Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) President Samir Xaud has come under intense scrutiny following reports alleging that federation funds were used to finance travel and accommodation for women with whom he allegedly had personal relationships, claims which the governing body has strongly denied.

According to Brazilian media outlet Portal Leo Dias, Xaud allegedly used CBF resources to fly fitness entrepreneur Camila Cristina Andrade to New York ahead of the FIFA World Cup and arranged accommodation for her at the Hyatt Regency Grand Central in Manhattan, as reported by the New York Post.

The report alleged that Andrade stayed at the hotel for eight days on a reservation made under Xaud's name, with the stay costing approximately USD 11,500. Photos published by the outlet purportedly showed Xaud and Andrade dining together at Harry Cipriani in New York on June 3 before leaving in a vehicle allegedly rented by the federation. **–ANI**

Lightning alert

Spectators at Saturday's Netherlands-Sweden World Cup game were told to shelter in place at the end of the contest because of lightning in the area.

Shortly after the final whistle blew for the Netherlands' 5-1 win, an announcement was made and a warning was posted on the giant video boards at both ends of the stadium.

Stadium officials weren't physically stopping fans from exiting, but urged them to stay inside the stadium for about 30 minutes after the match ended as rain swept through the area. An email to FIFA requesting the exact time that the shelter in place was lifted was not immediately answered.

The crowd of 68,777, which was overwhelmingly pro-Netherlands, danced and cheered as music played while waiting for the all-clear to exit Houston Stadium, which is home to the NFL's Houston Texans and called NRG Stadium. **–AP**

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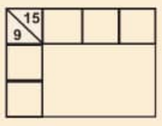
SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

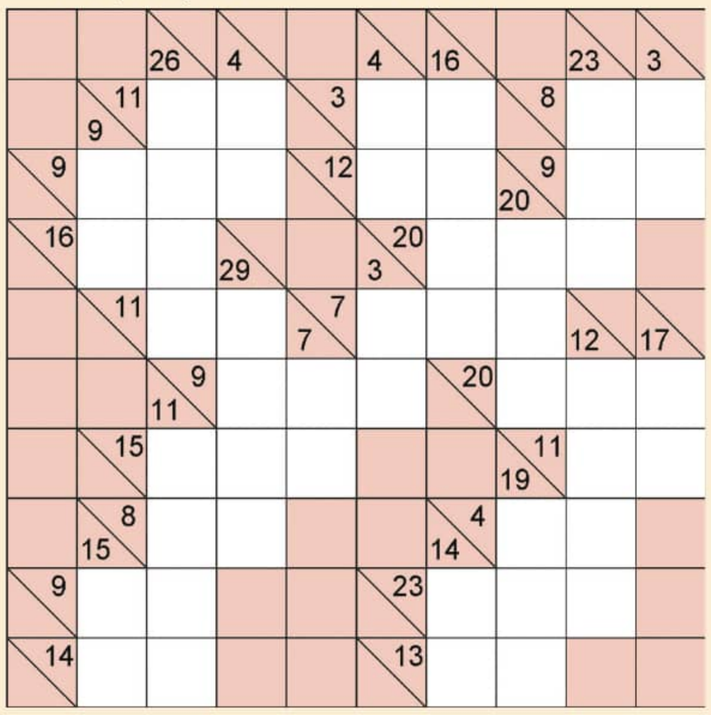
13 ÷ √169 ÷ (1/3) = ?

Kakuro

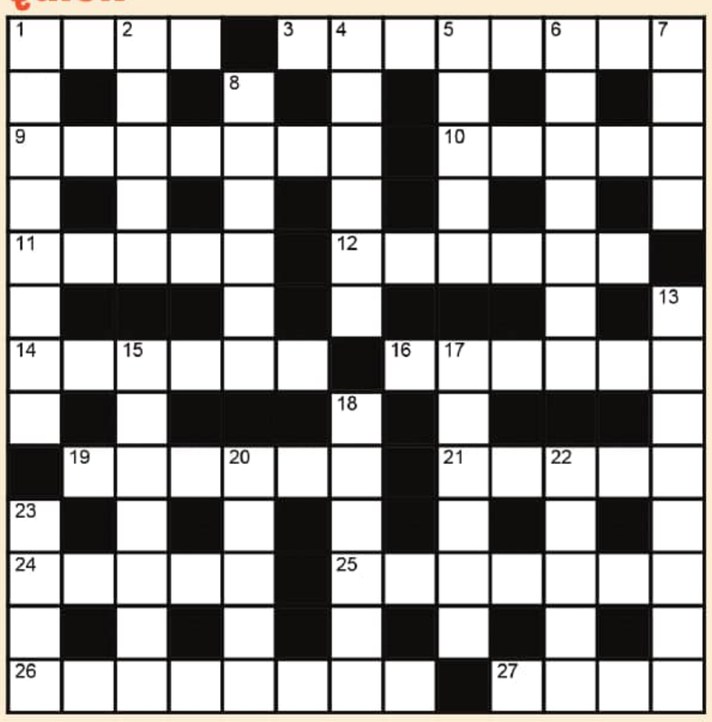
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Atlas entries (4)
3 Where in Karnataka Shiravati River drops 253 meters (3,5)
9 Adrenaline for one, glucagon for another (7)
10 Composition for nine (5)
11 Linkage or connection (5)
12 Willow twigs for basket-making (6)
14 Cooking instructions (6)
16 Sparsely or slenderly (6)
19 Perplex or bewilder (6)
21 Ferocious fish (5)
24 Achieve success (2,3)
25 Capital of Uganda (7)
26 Intruding in other people's affairs (8)
27 Volcano in Sicily (4)

DOWN

1 M in M S Dhoni (8)
2 A hard heat-resistant glass (5)
4 NW US state (6)
5 Mushrooms, toadstools etc (5)
6 In the ___ ___ : eventually? (4,3)
7 Abolished Indian custom (4)
8 Disposes of; completes; finishes (4,2)
13 Equestrian competition (8)
15 Chopped hay and straw as cattle food, teased or bantered? (7)
17 Emraan ___ of Gangster fame (6)
18 Summon with the finger (6)
20 Ferocious (5)
22 Away from (5)
23 Ancient alphabet used in Celtic inscriptions (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: S EQUALS G

XZI HVAI YWA JWAAWP RJ XW UIGAQ JWCIXZRQS.

Linemaro

I may not be a genie, but I can make your dreams come true

Mindchow

Words are easy, like the wind; faithful friends are hard to find

Joke of the day

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade... and then throw it in the face of the person who gave you the lemons until they give you the oranges you originally asked for

Loop

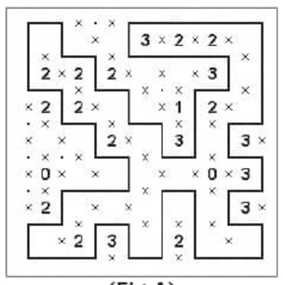
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

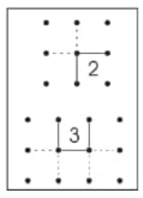
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

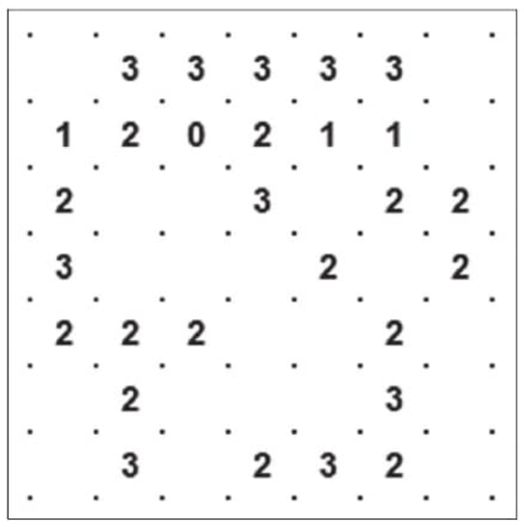
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



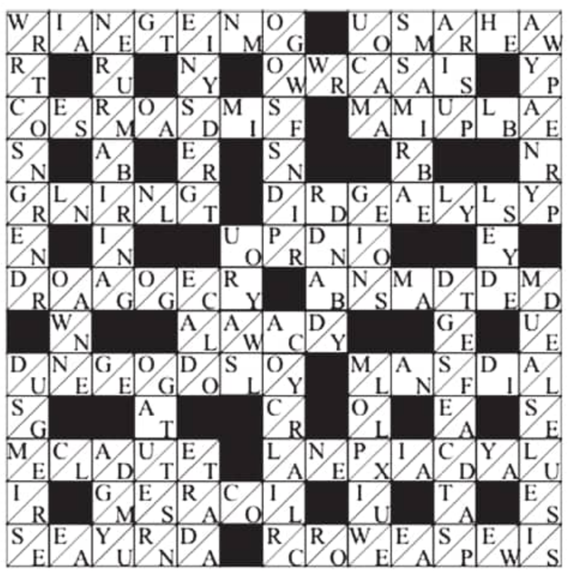
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



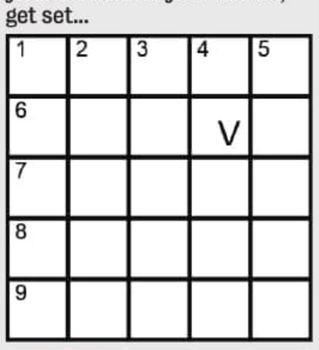
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

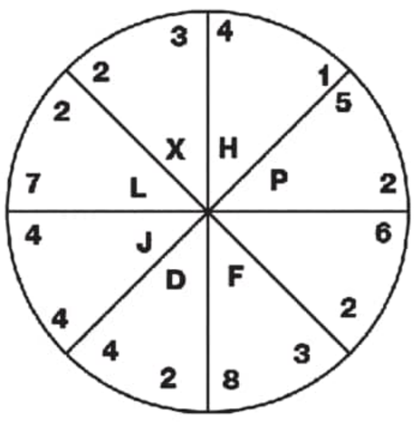
1 Tacos; 6 Votes; 7 Meeds; 8 Niter; 9 To act

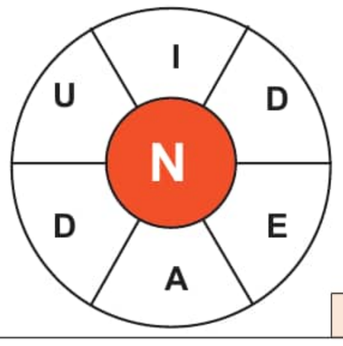
DOWN

1 Acids; 2 Tones; 3 Comte; 4 Voter; 5 State

Mensapuzzle

Which letter is missing from around the centre of the wheel?





Bull's eye

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

04 Average; **05** Good; **07** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

		5		9		4	3	
	9	1			4		7	
				2			9	
					2		6	9
		4	5		9	8		
9	1		8					
	4			1				
	8		4			9	1	
	2	7		5		3		

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 8

3 6 8 9

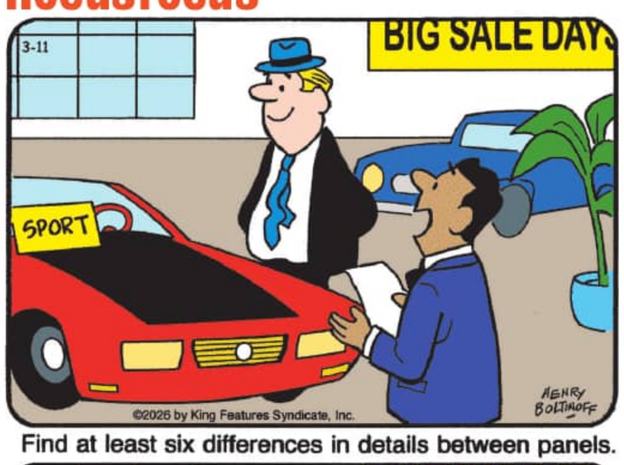
Medium = 6

2 7 9 9

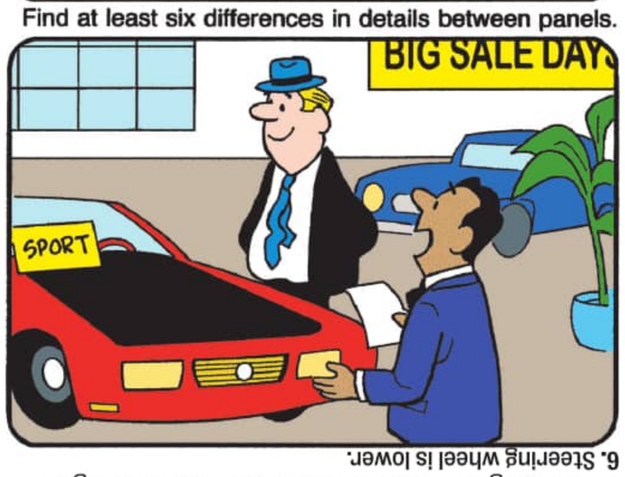
Hard = 8

5 6 8 5

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



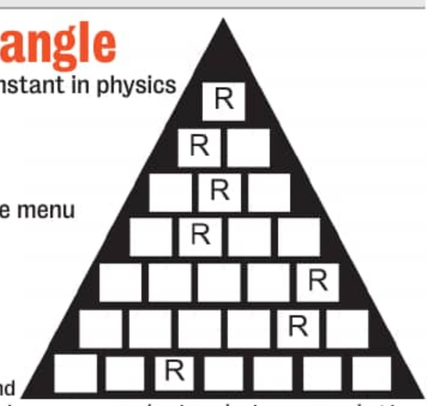
Differences: 1. Hood is different. 2. Arm is lower. 3. Leaf is higher. 4. Hair is different. 5. Window is higher. 6. Steering wheel is lower.

Riddler

A prisoner is told, "If you tell a lie we will hang you; if you tell the truth we will shoot you." What can he say to save himself?

Alpha triangle

1 Universal gas constant in physics
2 Again, prefix
3 Miner's find
4 God of love
5 More painful
6 Chooses from the menu
7 Boundaries

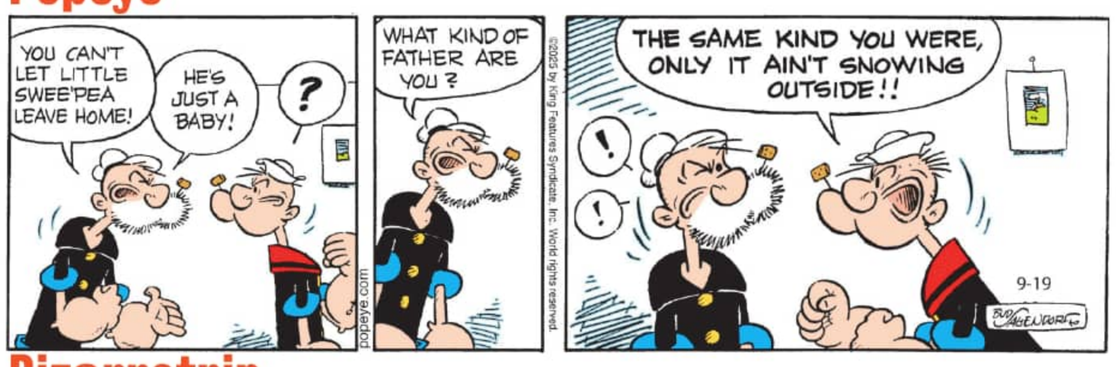


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

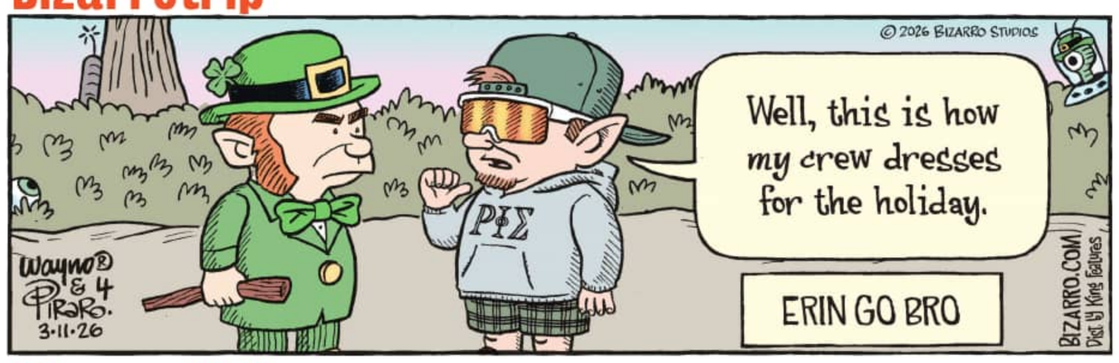
DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye


YOU CAN'T LET LITTLE SWEE'PEA LEAVE HOME!
HE'S JUST A BABY!
?
WHAT KIND OF FATHER ARE YOU ?
THE SAME KIND YOU WERE, ONLY IT AIN'T SNOWING OUTSIDE!!
9-19
popeye.com

Bizarrotrip


© 2026 BIZARRO STUDIOS
Well, this is how my crew dresses for the holiday.
ERIN GO BRO
Wayno & Piraro 3·11·26
BIZARRO.COM Dist. by King Features

Diamond Lil

I BET I KNOW WHAT POTATO CHIP FLAVOR YOU'D BE, LIL
OH? WHAT?
SEA SALT AND VINEGAR!
AM I RIGHT?!
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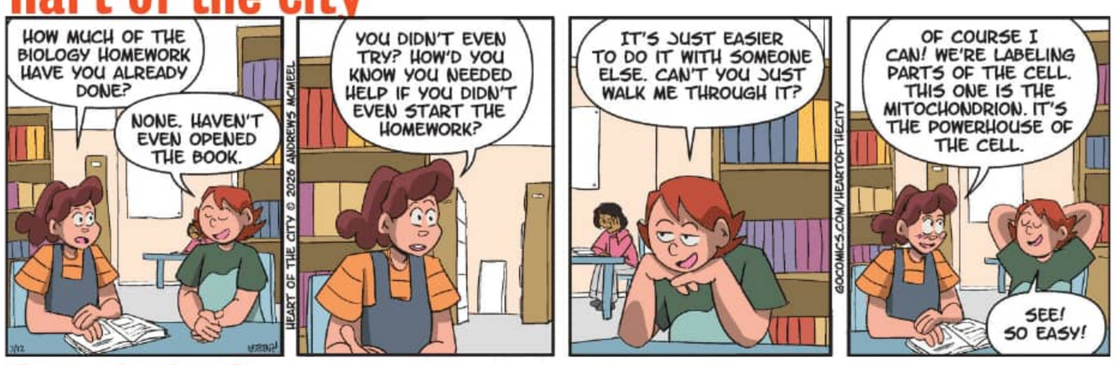
Hart of the city


HOW MUCH OF THE BIOLOGY HOMEWORK HAVE YOU ALREADY DONE?
NONE. HAVEN'T EVEN OPENED THE BOOK.
YOU DIDN'T EVEN TRY? HOW'D YOU KNOW YOU NEEDED HELP IF YOU DIDN'T EVEN START THE HOMEWORK?
IT'S JUST EASIER TO DO IT WITH SOMEONE ELSE. CAN'T YOU JUST WALK ME THROUGH IT?
OF COURSE I CAN! WE'RE LABELING PARTS OF THE CELL. THIS ONE IS THE MITOCHONDRION. IT'S THE POWERHOUSE OF THE CELL.
SEE! SO EASY!
HEART OF THE CITY © 2026 ANDREWS MCMEEL
@OCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

WHAT ABOUT ME!?
EVERYONE HAS A WEDDING JOB EXCEPT ME!
YOU, MY FRIEND, HAVE THE BEST JOB OF ALL!
YOU'RE GOING TO BE THE LORD OF THE RINGS!
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BATIUK & DAVIS tombatiuk.com/books
3-11

Mutts

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Your communication skills are amplified, making this an ideal day for public speaking or writing. Career networking yields a lucrative opportunity that aligns with your core ethics. Financially, meticulous record-keeping saves you from a costly future error. Romance requires you to step out of your comfort zone. Maintain your physical stamina by staying consistently hydrated throughout the day.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20

Communication may feel exhausting today, especially with emotionally demanding tasks surrounding you unexpectedly. Taking time for rest and mental clarity helps restore balance beautifully. Meditation, quiet reflection, and personal space support emotional calmness and renewed focus.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20

Unexpected challenges may seem frustrating initially today, though adaptability helps turn situations positively in your favour. Staying calm and resourceful creates opportunities within difficulties naturally. A flexible mindset transforms obstacles into surprisingly rewarding experiences and outcomes.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21

Keeping opinions to yourself today prevents unnecessary tension and misunderstandings around you beautifully. Not every thought needs immediate expression, especially regarding others' work or decisions. Quiet observation and staying focused personally help maintain harmony and productivity naturally.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23

Competition or pressure at work may arise today, though your experience and abilities remain stronger than any opposition. Trust your knowledge confidently and respond strategically. Staying composed helps you prove your value while strengthening professional respect naturally.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Hot weather and physical exhaustion may lower your energy today, making rest and hydration especially important. Staying indoors comfortably helps protect your wellbeing beautifully. Prioritising relaxation, cooling down, and self-care restores strength and emotional balance naturally now.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23

Direct communication benefits you greatly today, especially when asking for what you truly want or deserve. Clarity prevents misunderstandings and protects you from being overlooked. Speaking confidently and honestly helps your needs receive proper attention and respect.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22

Practicality becomes necessary today as unrealistic expectations or attention-seeking behaviours lose their appeal naturally. Returning focus toward personal growth and daily responsibilities creates balance beautifully. Listening more carefully to others strengthens relationships and encourages smoother interactions ahead.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22

Irritation and restlessness may surface easily today, though staying calm helps everything flow much more smoothly. Meditation, breathing exercises, and patience restore emotional balance beautifully. Avoiding unnecessary conflict protects your energy while keeping relationships peaceful and supportive.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22

Today strongly favours reconnecting with someone meaningful through honest conversation and heartfelt effort. Taking the first step toward communication opens beautiful possibilities naturally. Friendships, family bonds, and romantic relationships all benefit from your openness and initiative now.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20

A refreshing perspective helps you release stress and appreciate the positives surrounding you today beautifully. Stepping back from worries creates emotional clarity naturally. Keeping an open mind allows optimism, gratitude, and renewed peace to enter your life.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19

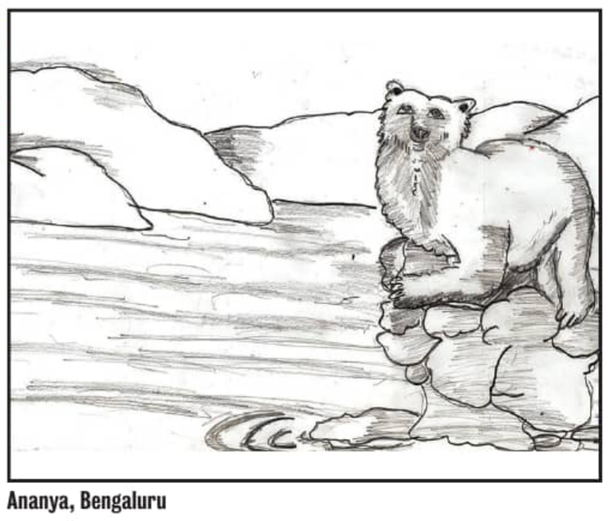
Physical activity and movement become especially important today for boosting your mood and overall wellbeing naturally. Staying active helps shake off lethargy beautifully while creating opportunities for exciting social connections and personal growth throughout the coming days.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20

Saying yes to fresh experiences today opens doors toward excitement, adventure, and personal discovery beautifully. Stepping outside familiar routines keeps life engaging and inspiring naturally. Embracing opportunities confidently helps you grow while avoiding boredom and emotional stagnation.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



Ananya, Bengaluru

Zara, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

RIDDLER You will hang me. If they hang him, then the statement was true and they could only hang him for telling a lie. If they shoot him, then it makes the statement a lie and they were only to shoot him for telling the truth. An alternate solution is to say, "You will not shoot me," leading to the same quandary for the killers.

FAST FIVE

A	S	C	O	T
S	T	O	V	E
D	E	M	E	S
I	N	E	R	T
C	O	T	T	A

SOLVE IN 1M

13 ÷13 ÷ (1/3) = 1^3 / 1 =1^3 = 3

STRIKE OUT

QUICK

MENSA PUZZLE

N. The numerical value of each letter equals the product of the two numbers in the opposite segment.

QUOTE UNCODE

The cure for sorrow is to learn something.
dean, dine, dined, dune, nude, UNAIDED, undid

BULL'S EYE

SUDOKU

2	7	5	6	9	1	4	3	8
6	9	1	3	8	4	2	7	5
4	3	8	7	2	5	1	9	6
8	5	3	1	4	2	7	6	9
7	6	4	5	3	9	8	2	1
9	1	2	8	6	7	5	4	3
3	4	9	2	1	8	6	5	7
5	8	6	4	7	3	9	1	2
1	2	7	9	5	6	3	8	4

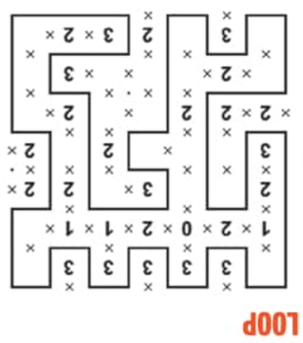
ALPHA TRIANGLE

R, Re, Ore, Eros, Sorer, Orders, Borders.

GO FIGURE

Easy
8 + 3 + 6 − 9 = 8
Medium
9 / 9 + 7 − 2 = 6
Hard
6 − 8 + 5 + 5 = 8

LOOP



KAKURO

Volume No 19, Issue No 122 RNI NO:KARENG/2007/21142 Published for the Proprietors, Metropolitan Media Company Ltd by Lokesh K.V. at No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011 and printed by him at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore–560 099 (Phones : Press : 080-22899999; Editorial : 080-40877666, Fax – 40877545, Registered Office: No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru–560 011, Email : mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com Editor : Ms. Seena Menon–responsible for selection of news under PRB Act. © Reproduction in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher is prohibited.

Main role
Hollywood actor Elisha Cuthbert recalled her four-year acting hiatus and said she didn't want to be on set after the birth of her second child

Yoga cheerleader

Actress and fitness enthusiast Malaika Arora has shared a heartfelt reflection on her journey with yoga. In her recent post on social media, she described how yoga has evolved from a simple practice into a deep-rooted passion and ultimately a way of life. Malaika emphasized how yoga has helped her reconnect with herself, maintain balance, and embrace a more mindful approach to overall well-being.

Taking to Instagram, Arora shared a series of photos in which she is seen performing various yoga asanas. The ace dancer offered a glimpse into her fitness routine, highlighting how yoga continues to be an essential part of her lifestyle.

For the caption, she wrote, "Yoga has been a part of my life for years, not just as a workout, but as a way to reconnect, reset, and find balance. What started as a practice became a passion and eventually a way of life.

A journey of breath, balance, and showing up. Grateful for everything yoga continues to teach me every single day. Happy Yoga Day, keep breathing, keep growing."

To note, the 'Chaiyya Chaiyya' girl is widely considered one of the fittest actresses in the industry. She is known for her disciplined fitness routine and healthy lifestyle. Malaika often shares glimpses from her yoga sessions on social media. **–ETimes**

Good news

Samantha seems to be in memorable phase of professional and personal life

Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu is currently enjoying a memorable phase in both her professional and personal life. Her latest release, 'Maa Inti Bangaaram', has opened to a positive response at the box office, giving the actress another reason to celebrate.

After the film's strong opening-day performance, Samantha took to social media to thank audiences for their support. In her post, she wrote, "To see a film open so well on day one is hugely humbling and means the world to us. So very glad to see the day when audiences embrace a film irrespective of whether it is male-led or female-led. And it's beautiful to see people show up wholeheartedly - from the young to the seniors - to cheer the film's release (sic)."

Samantha also used the opportunity to acknowledge the role played by women viewers in the film's opening-day collections. She noted that audience demographics are evolving and helping diverse stories find their place in theatres. Adding to her note, she wrote, "The most heartening thing of all is seeing women contribute so heavily to the opening day. For the longest time, we've heard that theatrical openings are driven by male audiences. It's wonderful to see the audience for cinema continue to grow and evolve. Our little production house delivered! Trala-laaaaaa (sic)."

Samantha has also been making news for developments in her personal life. The actress was recently seen celebrating the film's success with her husband Raj and members of the movie's team. Photographs and videos from the gathering quickly circulated on social media. Fans soon began speculating after noticing what appeared to be a baby bump.

ETimes has got confirmation from Samantha's spokesperson that the news of her pregnancy is true. The actress is expecting her first child, with the baby due in December 2026.

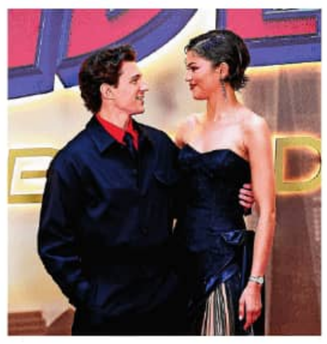
–ETimes

Zendaya 'fell hard' for Tom after drag act

Hollywood actress Zendaya was impressed by Tom Holland when he dressed in drag for a performance of Rihanna's 'Umbrella on Lip Sync Battle' in 2017.

The actress reportedly fell for the actor owing to his fun and unfiltered side, reports 'Female First UK'.

The actor, now 30, donned a vinyl halter-neck corset with silver buttons down the front, paired with matching shorts with white trim, inspired by the 38-year-old singer's costume in the 2007 track's music video, and the actress, now 29, became "smitten".



A source told The Mail on Sunday newspaper that Zendaya "fell hard for him" after watching the now viral act. They added, "It's not just sexy, but it shows how amazingly talented he is. It takes a lot of confidence for a straight guy to pull off drag". When he was announced as Spider–Man, people were taken aback because he's slightly wimpy. But what he lacks in stature he more than makes up for in talent", she added. As per 'Female First UK', Zendaya faced off against Tom on 'Lip Sync Battle' in 2017, as part of promotion for their film 'Spider-Man: Homecoming'. **–IANS**

Taking dad's legacy forward

On Father's Day, actress Huma Qureshi has shared an emotional note reflecting on her father and the values he left behind.

She spoke about how she has come to understand the depth of his sacrifices and life lessons over time. Huma also expressed her pride in carrying his legacy forward in her own journey. Sharing photos, the 'Maharani' actress wrote, "As children, we think our fathers have all the answers. Then we grow up and realise they were figuring things out too. Carrying responsibilities we didn't understand. Making sacrifices they never spoke about."

"Showing up every day, even when life wasn't easy. Somewhere along the way, you stop seeing your father as just a parent and start seeing the person behind the role. And that changes everything. Maybe that's why the answer to so many questions in life quietly remains the same. Kaun hai woh? Dad, before anyone. Feels surreal to take his legacy forward, the Saleems are now serving stories too. Our first one arrives on 3rd July. Happy Father's Day," added Huma Qureshi.

The photos feature Huma from her childhood to the present day. **–IANS**

A mirror of devotion and traditions

URABBA (KANNADA)
3.0 RATING ★★★★★
- **DIRECTOR** Lucky Shankar
- **ACTORS** Naresh Gowda, Tanisha Kuppanda, Mithra, Payal Changappa, Siddu Moolimani, Doddanna, Biradar, Bala Rajwadi, Arvind Rao, and Mimicry Gopi.
- **Duration** 119 minutes
- **Certification** UA

Lucky Shankar seems to have got lucky to get a chance to direct a movie that explores traditions, customs and devotion of people at Ujjini village in Kunigal. The highlight of the movie is that it was filmed during the Sri Ujjani Chowdeshwari Devi festival. The movie transports audiences to Ujjani.

The director succeeds in interweaving a few real incidents into the main story. The movie highlights the importance of communal harmony and ill-effects of alcohol. It tries to convey a message on the need to stop animal sacrifice during village festivals.

The movie begins with a person from Ujjani village inviting the owner of a TV channel to attend Sri Ujjani Chowdeshwari Fair. The media team visits the village where Jagappa (Biradar), one of the villagers, explains the traditions and customs at the village and the importance of Sri Ujjini Chowdeshwari Devi.

While villagers are busy with preparations to treat their guests, the director introduces a scene where a Police Officer assigns a team led by Aravind (Aravind Rao) to arrest Naresh (Naresh Gowda) for a murder that took place a year ago. The police team arrives at Ujjani and is set to arrest Naresh. You have to watch the movie to know what happens to Naresh and the circumstances that led to his involvement in the murder case.

It is surprising to see glamorous actress Tanisha Kuppanda paired with actor Mithra. The other pair is Siddu Moolimani and Payal Changappa who fall in love instantly. However, a scene where Bala Rajwadi and another actor, in an inebriated condition, argue with each other looks incongruous. Naresh Gowda, who supported the movie, has acted well and also ensured other actors get sufficient screen space.

The film is a good watch if you want to see the Sri Ujjani Chowdeshwari Fair up close.

–Y Maheswara Reddy